



From : Dick Balharry
Sent : 16 April 2013
To : Joe Dorward
Subject : Red Deer Numbers

Joe,

Walk among the Caledon fragments of Mar Lodge estate and voice your own opinion on whether the modest regeneration is enough to at least maintain the present cover of self generated trees.

My view is that the reduction in grazing has helped but the level of culling will need to be maintained and possibly increased if the seedlings of tomorrow are to survive in sufficient numbers to allow future generations of people to "feel the past" in these magnificent living treasures.

Nearby Glen Feshie has demonstrated how one private landowner has taken action with spectacular results that offer an excellent example.

However most deer populations around M[ar] L[odge] are held at appropriate numbers to satisfy the demands of recreational killing objectives.

That creates a tension between the desires of private owners on Deeside and the very important and vital requirement to meet the demands of the British and European Designations that cover such remnants.

If culling on neighbouring estates was undertaken to enhance habitats (both food and shelter) for deer much of the problem would be solved. Base line monitoring of habitats followed by systematic analysis of results would be a useful start.

When a shepherd decides to move sheep from one field to different pastures, he will usually do this on the basis of the quality of remaining food available.

This is a discussion that will continue until we have a much more responsible long term strategic management of our natural resources for Scotland's mountains and glens, including native forests, commercial forests, upland agriculture and recreational activity for people.

After all that, much more than I intended, I look forward to your response after you have seen the levels of regen[eration] at Mar Lodge, but then you may have already walked over the area?

Dick